

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, at line 8, with the following:

E1 In it's most basic form, the invention can be characterized, in one embodiment as a method of processing data, in data services, with a set of rate-compatible Turbo Codes optimized at high code rates and derived from a universal constituent code, the Turbo Codes having compatible puncturing patterns. The method comprises: encoding a signal at a first and second encoder using a best universal rate 1/2 constituent code universal with higher and lower code rates, the first encoder and the second encoder each producing a respective plurality of parity bits for a data bit; puncturing the respective plurality of parity bits at each encoder with a higher rate best puncturing pattern; and puncturing the respective plurality of parity bits at each encoder with a lower rate best puncturing pattern.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, at line 23, with the following:

E2 In a variation, a method of processing data in data services uses a set of rate-compatible Turbo Codes derived from an optimal universal rate 1/3 constituent code, the Turbo Codes having similar constituent codes and compatible puncturing patterns, and comprises: encoding a signal with a best rate 1/3 constituent code at a first and a second encoder, each encoder producing a respective plurality of parity bits for each data bit; puncturing the plurality of parity bits with the a higher rate best puncturing pattern; and puncturing the plurality of parity bits with a lower rate best puncturing pattern.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 16, at line 1, with the following:

E3 3) form all possible rate 1/2 and 1/3 Turbo Codes by combining each rate 1/2 constituent code pair with the ~~test~~ rate 1/2 and rate 1/3 test puncturing patterns;